in the draft National Pharmaceutical Policy, 2006 that a separate Drugs (Price Regulation and Control) Act may be introduced to strengthen the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) for effective monitoring and enforcement of drug prices.

An initial draft on this Bill has been prepared. Comments of various stakeholders have been called for on this Bill. No time frame has been fixed for processing of this Bill.

NIPER Institute in Gujarat

2610. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Gujarat is a front runner in the production of drugs and pharmaceutical products with 40 percent of total production in the country;

(b) if so, whether the Gujarat Government felt any necessity of having an institute like NIPER or its branch in their State;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Central Government have taken a decision to set up such an institute in Gujarat; and

(d) if so, the final outcome of the decision thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE). (a)As per the Report of the Working Group on Drugs and Pharmaceuticals for the Eleventh Five-Year Plan (2007-12), the estimated production during 2004-05 was Rs. 9034.00 crores for Bulk Drugs and Rs. 31946.00 crores for formulations. Some of the major Drug manufacturing units are set up in Gujarat. Separate data for each state is not maintained.

(b) National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER) located at Mohali, Punjab is the first National level institute of its kind in India in the field of pharmaceutical sciences set up by an act of Parliament on 26.6.1998. Realising the need for setting up of more NIPER like institutes in India a Committee consisting of experts from NIPER was constituted by Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals. The Committee has submitted its report in January 2006 and it has recommended for the

setting up of NIPER like institutes at few other locations in India including Ahmedabad in Gujarat. In this context Government of Gujarat has shown their keen interest to get such institution like NIPER established in their State.

(c) and (d) No final decision has yet been takien to set up an institute like NIPER in Gujarat. However, in order to facilitate setting up of more NIPER like institutes in the country this Department has initiated action to amend the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research act, 1998. Cabinet Note in this regard has already been sen* to Cabinet Secretariat for consideration of the proposal to amend NIPER Act.

Contamination of imported wheat by jute bags

2611. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether sub-standard jute bags are contributing to contaminate the imported wheat thereby rendering it unfit for human consumption, and

(b) if so, the details in this regard and the steps proposed to be taken to prevent such contamination?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Some jute bags not conforming to Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) specifications were found by the Food Corporation of India (FCI).

(b) Accordingly the Ministry of Textiles have constituted a Joint Inspection Team consisting of Food Corporation of India (FCI), Indian Jute Mils Association (IJMA), Directorate General of Supplies & Disposals (DGS&D), Directorate of Quality Assurance and Office of Jute Commissioner, Kolkata to conduct an inspection regarding conformity of jute bags to BIS standards. Jute Commissioner has also initiated action against the alleged defaulting units.

To ensure quality, FCI has been purchasing jute bags through DGS&D. The Jute bags are checked for quality by DGS&D before they are accepted by FCI for packing foqdgrains.